



ROBERT L. EHRlich, JR.
GOVERNOR

STATE HOUSE
100 STATE CIRCLE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
(410) 974-3901
(TOLL FREE) 1-800-811-8336

TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

May 21, 2003

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
Senate President
State House
Annapolis MD 21401

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, today I have vetoed Senate Bill 532- *Baltimore City- Alcoholic Beverages-Licensed Premises Near Churches or Schools*.

Senate Bill 532 would prohibit Baltimore City from issuing new liquor licenses in the 46th Legislative District (according to the 1986 Legislative Districts) to buildings located within 300 feet of a church or school. According to the 1986 map, District 46 covers most of Southeast Baltimore City, including the Highlandtown and Canton neighborhoods.

For all intents and purposes, Senate Bill 532 is an attempt to single out one business owner and prevent the opening of a new restaurant in the Canton section of Baltimore City. Businesses, community leaders, legislators, and constituents from the Canton community have weighed in on both sides of the issue. The question at the center of the controversy is whether O'Donnell Square should have another restaurant, an issue most appropriately decided by the local community.

Local citizens have avenues of recourse to support or oppose a business through the long-established hearing and permit processes of local zoning laws and liquor license laws. Senate Bill 532 short circuits that process, restricts business opportunities, limits community planning, and discourages legitimate business competition.

For the above stated reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill 532.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor